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fatigue takes this shape with me, and everything goes 'higgle-wiggledy, hi-cockalorum,' or words to that effect." Short of pure sainthood, perfect tranquillity is seldom anything but self-complacence, and it is not surprising to find that these alternations of mood from the exalted to the nonsensical, from the earnest to the "frivolous," were accompanied by some measure of divine discontent. Certainly, there is no complaint or expression of dissatisfaction with life in these memoirs, yet one would hardly call their dominant note restfulness. Perhaps it is just this unrest, this consciousness of the dualism of life at a high level of mental and spiritual development, which gives to Mrs. Howe's Life its fascination and its profound human appeal.

ORDEAL BY BATTLE. By Frederick Scott Oliver, London: Macmillan and Company, Limited, 1915.

It would be according far too large a measure of praise to an excellent piece of work to declare that Mr. Oliver's book about the great war is a perfectly coherent and well-rounded treatise, sufficient in its analysis of cause and effect, wholly satisfying in its inferences. The unity of Mr. Oliver's book, is in a sense, largely formal. As in other works upon this or similar themes, little enlightenment is to be gained from the orderly marshalling of topics: the whole refuses to be firmly knit together; the treatise resolves itself into a series of comments, and the *obiter dicta* sometimes become of more importance than what appears for the moment to be the main thesis.

Measured by an ideal standard, or by the desires of those who crave certainty in a world of doubt, Mr. Oliver's book is deficient—as the author would readily concede. It opens up no new and royal road to comprehension. The reader, in fact, will find himself traversing, in several different directions, paths more or less well trodden. The fact remains, however, that Mr. Oliver has written, on the whole, the most energetic, the most subtle and the most suggestive discussion from the English point of view of the war and the larger problems it raises that has yet been produced. In intellectual reach, in psychological penetration, in the combination of dispassionate logic with scathing criticism and stirring appeal, Mr. Oliver excels most of his contemporaries. He possesses the eloquence of a modern prophet—a prophet, let us say of imperialism or of militarism—with more of the usual excess and with none of the customary cocksureness. This is high praise, but it is deserved.

In consequence of the broad nature of his theme, Mr. Oliver does, indeed, tell us a good deal that we have heard before; though it may well be that we have never heard it so well expressed nor with precisely similar emphasis. That "peace is the greatest of

British interests," that "peaceful intentions will not ensure peace,"—these are ideas much bruited about at present. Again, Mr. Oliver's whole discussion of the causes of war, with its just emphasis upon moral elements, such as underlay our own "irrepressible conflict," is, though clear and sound, not by any means novel. The reasoning of the chapter entitled "Who Wanted War?" is extraordinarily forceful, but not unfamiliar in outline. Of more startling import is the author's rather convincing demonstration of the thesis that war was far from inevitable had England been materially and morally prepared for it. Full of psychological and political insight, too, is the chapter upon the causes and characteristics of international ill-will. But the chapter upon "German Miscalculations," and the whole review of the spirit of German policy—especially the chapters upon "The New Moralists" and "The Statecraft of a Priesthood"—are in the main but restatements, with some enhanced meanings and some wise retrenchments, of general views with which the world has of late familiarized itself.

The really arresting thought and the real power of Mr. Oliver's treatise are chiefly concentrated in the parts of the book entitled "The Spirit of British Policy" and "Democracy and National Service." It is the author's discussion of these subjects, one may surmise, that will take the strongest hold upon the interest of American readers; for here, in dealing with the problems of England in her war with Germany, Mr. Oliver has reached out for—and, many will think, has grasped—principles that concern not only England, but all free governments as well.

In the first place, the author makes it plain that England's danger from Germany is twofold: there is not only the danger of conquest by force of arms, but there is also the danger of conquest by ideas. Two different kinds of cosmos, or two irreconcilably different conceptions of the one cosmos, are in conflict. The author goes on to show the relation of this struggle to the fate of democratic institutions in general. "It is not true," he points out, "that this is a war between the rival principles of democracy and autocracy." It is rather "a fight between the modern spirit of Germany and the unchanging spirit of civilization." The former assumption confuses cause with effect. "And yet it is unquestionably true to say, that by reason of Germany's procedure, this war is being waged against democracy—not perhaps by intention, but certainly in effect. For if the Allies should be defeated, or even if they should fail to conquer their present enemies, the result must necessarily be wounding to the credit of popular institutions all the world over—fatal to their existence in Europe at any rate, fatal conceivably, at no long distance of time, to their existence elsewhere than in Europe."

This statement of the case as regards democracy is followed up by an analysis of the British process of "muddling through,"—an

analysis which is in fact not only an unsparing, a terribly gentle, criticism of British methods and British statesmen, but an earnest admonition as to the danger of deterioration to which democratic government is exposed through the operation of the party system. The concealment or neglect of real issues—in the case of England, such issues as the need of security and the importance of maintaining the balance of power—the substitution of logical agility for fundamental truth which occurs when government has become too partisan and too “lawyerlike”; a dearth of leaders who really lead—these are some of the dangers which the author points out, and illustrates. Mr. Oliver is a believer in democracy; he has faith that it will ultimately conquer; yet he pertinently observes that, “though there may be consolation for certain minds, there is no safety for the nation in the simple faith that democracy is in its nature invincible. On the contrary, it fights at a disadvantage, both by reason of its inferiority in central control, and because it shrinks from ruthlessness.” Democracy, in short, must demonstrate its right to survive.

Closely connected with this examination of the weaknesses of democracy as revealed in a crisis, is the author’s comparison of compulsory with voluntary service. Just here, Mr. Oliver’s conclusions may seem to American readers startlingly paradoxical. That voluntary enlistment is the least oppressive way of recruiting the army and the one most in harmony with free institutions, would seem to many almost self-evident. But there are puzzling questions that may be asked. Is there, for instance, really any such thing as voluntary enlistment? Is not enlistment practically always the result of some form of compulsion, as for example the compulsion of hunger? And is not public compulsion preferable to private or accidental compulsion of any sort? And, again, is it either wise or just to impose the duty of defending the country upon a body, not indeed of “mercenary,” but certainly of professional, soldiers?

Or by what right do the majority of the citizens of a nation demand that their lives and property should be protected by two classes—those who love danger, and those who possess an unusually strong sense of duty? The whole discussion is vividly illustrated by references to the present British methods of recruiting—through posters and pleas.

This book of Mr. Oliver’s—written at high tension yet with calmness, with argumentative adroitness and yet with fairness—commands attention. It undoubtedly has significance for Americans.

NOTES OF A BUSY LIFE. By Joseph Benson Foraker. Cincinnati: Stewart and Kidd Company, 1916.

“As I now look back over my twelve years of service in the